DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 446 353 EA 030 639

AUTHOR	Butin, Dan W.
TITLE	Rethinking High School: A Study of Focus Schools in Danville, Virginia. Volume 4, Building Blocks to Better Learning Series.
INSTITUTION	Virginia Univ., Charlottesville. Thomas Jefferson Center for Educational Design.
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	41p.; For volumes 1-3 in this series, see ED 428 530, ED 425 608, and ED 426 570.
AVAILABLE FROM	University of Virginia Bookstore, P.O. Box 400820, Charlottesville, VA 22904-4820 ($14); Tel: 800-759-4667 (Toll free); Web site: http://www.bookstore.virginia.edu; e-mail: bookshop@virginia.edu.
PUB TYPE	Information Analyses (070) -- Opinion Papers (120)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Academic Achievement; *Academic Standards; Attendance; *Decentralization; Dropout Rate; *Educational Environment; Governance; High Schools; Learning Experience; Public Schools; *School Choice
IDENTIFIERS	*Danville City School District VA

ABSTRACT

In 1997, the Danville City Public Schools opened four focus schools at the high school level, adding 2 more schools in the next 2 years. This booklet relates the efforts of this small urban school district to bring educational choice to its students, parents, and teachers, while having to grapple with issues of autonomy and governance, innovation and academic rigor. Due to focus schools, student achievement, standards of learning scores, and attendance have improved; fewer "at risk" students have dropped out; and students and teachers are talking about the learning process. Through the process of examining their accomplishments and struggles, teachers, administrators, and policymakers can better promote innovative and sustainable learning environments in their own schools and districts. The booklet analyzes the challenges and stumbling blocks of starting innovative learning environments, and provides some suggestions and guidelines based on Danville's experience. It answers several questions: What are focus schools and how can they promote reform? How were these schools implemented and what can be learned from this process? Appendices list individuals, print, and Web-based references, and the "Danville Public Schools Focus School Planning Guide, January 1998." (DFR)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.